



9900 Thomas Nelson Highway

Lovington, VA 22949

May 22, 2020

PARISH NEWSLETTER #6.2020 REOPENING OF PUBLIC MASSES!

1) Public Masses at St Mary's start this Sunday May 24. The following apply and we ask that all follow this guidance.

2) **Sunday Mass times will be 10:00 am (English) and 1:00pm (Spanish).** A group of Parishioners has volunteered to participate as Safety Ushers in these masses to keep all of us safe. Please follow their guidance! Note the time change for the Spanish mass!

3) We will start out on a first come, first in basis. 50% of sanctuary capacity is the maximum. Based on the numbers that are attending that may be amended to accommodate those who may have to travel a long distance and would like to know they can get in. But for now, first come, first in. Parishioners must arrive at least 30 minutes before mass is to start.

4) Parishioners must bring their own face coverings - that must be worn properly over the nose and mouth and mask must not have an exhale port which allows exhale with less restrictions.

5) **Parishioners must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of mass! No exceptions!**

6) Specific instructions on procedures to be followed during Mass will be given before Mass begins.

7) Parishioners who answer **yes** to any of the following:

- a) Have you or anyone in your household had a fever in the past two (2) weeks?
- b) Do you or anyone in your household have a new cough or new shortness of breath?
- c) Have you come into contact with anyone who is positive with COVID-19 in the past two (2) weeks?

or **do not have a face mask will not be permitted to enter the church.**

8) THE BISHOP'S DISPENSATION FROM ATTENDING SUNDAY MASS WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT AND THE MASS WILL BE LIVESTREAMED FOR THE FAITHFUL WHO DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH ATTENDING IN PERSON. THE DISPENSATION WILL CONTINUE AS LONG AS OUR CHURCHES ARE NOT FULLY OPEN.

9) Parishioners in a vulnerable category are encouraged to stay at home (over 65 and/or immune-compromised).

The masses will continue to be livestreamed on the Parish Facebook Page at 10am and 1pm. The link to the facebook page is <https://m.facebook.com/St-Marys-Catholic-Church-164123760290127/>.

10) **Daily Mass and Mass intentions.** Father Carlos would like to dedicate both Sunday Mass and Friday Daily Mass to special intentions. If you have such an intention. Please contact Father (757-751-8194) or call the office (434-263-8509) with the name of the person or persons.

11) **Supporting the Parish.** While we have no public masses to take up a collection the parish still has expenses and bills. So this would be a great time to sign up for eGiving (<https://membership.faithdirect.net/VA947>) if you are capable of giving. The Diocese has also set up a web page (<https://offertory.richmonddiocese.org>) for gifts to the parish online but you do not want to sign up for eGiving. Lastly you can always mail a check to the parish.

Saint Mary Catholic Church,
9900 Thomas Nelson Highway
Lovingston, VA 22949

12) **Sacrament of Reconciliation/Pastor's Office Hours.** Father Carlos will hear confessions on Fridays from 2-4 and Saturdays from 3-4pm at the church. Please adhere to social distancing requirements. No more than 10 people total in the church at any one time and 6 feet must be maintained between all people. The confession station is in the forward left side of the nave next to the Baptismal Font. Masks are required. Wash your hands before and after or use hand sanitizer. Father is available during these times for private consultations.

13) **Additional Diocesan Information on Reopening.**

We know the desire to participate in the liturgy and receive the Eucharist is incredibly strong. Ways are being explored to address this concern, all the while continuing the care and concern for the physical and spiritual health

of all. **We are reminded that the greatest divine law is that we love God and our neighbor; all other laws and individual rights are subordinate to that supreme divine law.**

Please be patient and charitable as we work through these difficult times.

Below are some things we all need to keep in mind:

Social distancing must be maintained.

- The six feet separation restriction is required.
- You are asked to wear a face covering, as recommended by the CDC. You must provide the covering. Anyone over age 3 must have a face covering.
- Those who are in the vulnerable category (i.e., older adult, 65 years and older; person who is immunocompromised), are encouraged to remain home.
- Anyone who is ill, or suspects he or she is ill, should refrain from participation in Mass. In addition, in light of CDC monitoring recommendations, anyone who arrives at the church and is exhibiting symptoms may be asked not to attend Mass out of an abundance of care and caution for others. The questions you will be asked are listed above and a yes to any of them will prevent you from attending mass in person.

Attendance at Mass will continue to be limited.

- Masses starting this weekend of 23-24 May are restricted to only 50% of sanctuary capacity. In our church that is approximately 50 people.

Church seating will be limited due to social distancing requirements.

- Only a certain number of pews will be available for use in order to maintain the required 6foot of social distancing.
- No holy water fonts, etc.

No one should expect that they will be safer in church than in any other public space.

Let us continue to keep those sick and afflicted with the COVID-19; those on the front-lines (medical professionals) caring for the sick; those who have died as a result of the virus; and all of our fellow parishioners and parishes in our prayers in these days ahead.

14) **Communications.** As no bulletin is being published during this period, the parish is using FLOCKNOTES and Facebook for regular electronic communication with email, texts and newsletters. This is in addition to the usual telephone and email communication. If you are not registered in FLOCKNOTES and are not receiving regular FLOCKNOTE emails and texts, you can sign up by texting GUADLUPE to 84576 and following the instructions. If you need to do it in Spanish then text GUADALUPE to 202-765-3441. To do it online, go to <https://StMaryCatholicChurch12.flocknote.com/everyone>. Only a name and email is required to register but if you have a text number that is highly recommended to ensure you don't miss any important material. **Recently a number of people have been added to FLOCKNOTES using data from the parish's office records. Much of the data is incomplete so if you want to correct your data follow the above process to sign up on flocknotes. That will correct your data.** The parish has a Facebook Group <https://m.facebook.com/groups/616666051719052/> which you can join by having a Facebook account and then asking to join the group. There are a number of St. Mary Groups on Facebook so make

sure you have ours. Our Logo is prominently displayed and there is no other Lovington St. Marys. As a member of the group you can post info and ask questions by commenting on posts. When you are asked a question upon requesting to join the group, answer I AM A PARISHIONER. And you will be allowed into the group. Father Calros has been posting gospel messages on this page. The parish also has a Facebook Page that is totally public and is only used to stream masses, the link to that page is listed in paragraph 1 above. **Please pass this info to any parishioner you know who is not receiving information from the parish.**

15) **Prayer Intentions.** During this period if you have specific prayer intentions or needs please contact Father Carlos, Deacon Bob, Bruce Leder or Wayne Parent. Flocknotes can and will be sent out requesting prayers and Father will dedicate his private masses to a person or persons.

16) **PASTOR's WORD for the ASCENSION OF THE LORD/Seventh Sunday of Easter**

This Sunday, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. We profess our faith in this glorious mystery when we say in the Nicene Creed: *He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.* It is important to understand that the Ascension does not mean that Jesus has departed from us. He has not abandoned us or left us orphans. With His Ascension into heaven, the Lord Jesus is now present to us in a new way. He remains with us in an invisible way. He has not left us alone. He is always close to us.

This Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord gives the hope and joy that our Lord remains with us always. How do you feel about his presence in your life? What new insight or comprehension would help you to grow in his wisdom and knowledge?

As Paul says on his letter to the Ephesians, may the eyes of your heart be enlightened that you know that belongs to his call? How these words of Paul influence your daily life experience to know more deeply your call and identity?

In nowadays that some people may have some ideas and philosophies about life and relationship. How this solemnity helps us to be focus in the mystery of Christ death and resurrection to walk with him as his disciples and church's people.

May this Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord prepares our hearts and minds to rejoice and glorify in the Lord always. As we pray together: Let's pray, Almighty ever-living God, who willed the Paschal Mystery to be encompassed as a sign in fifty days, grant that from out of the scattered nations the confusion of many tongues may be gathered by heavenly grace into one great confession of your name. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son. Amen.

God Bless you,

Carlos Lerma, Pastor

Ministry News

Migrant Worker Ministry

The ministry has ceased visits to the migrant camps until it is safe to do so. An online conference was held on Saturday 2 May with the Migrant Ministry of the Eastern Shore. Father Michael McAndrew, known as PADRE MIGRANTE spoke at the conference conceding the Ministry of the Moment exercised by most Migrant ministers and how that can be applicable and an asset to these times we are faced with due to the pandemic. His presentation is available on the St. Mary's facebook group page and on his own facebook page, PADRE MIGRANTE.

Prison Ministry

The prison ministry is on hiatus until the state will allow visitors to the prison.

Knights of Columbus

John Paul 2nd Council 16535 met via ZOOM at 7pm on Tuesday 12 May. At the meeting the Knights agreed to purchase a large commercial grade barbeque to use during fundraisers. During this Pandemic the Knights are now allowing members to join completely on line. Anyone who like to join via this streamlined and easy process can contact Wayne Parent (wcparent7@aol.com) or Len Thompson (lenthompson@gmail.com) to receive info on how to do this. If you have thought about joining, now is the time. If you have never thought about it, now is the time!

